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Oral History: Gloria Chaney Kitchel
by Laurie Horn and Evelyn McClure Tuesday, Oct. 29, 1996

EM: Tell us something about your family. How far back do you trace your family in Sonoma County? When did they first settle here?

GK: My grandmother was born in Rincon Valley. The other grandparents were born back East. Then they came out here.

EM: What were all their names?

GK: Grandmother and grandfather in Healdsburg were Mr. and Mrs. William Chaney and my grandmother in Santa Rosa was Sara Underhill Crane. My dad was born in Healdsburg. I was also born in Healdsburg. We moved down here. I don't know when my grandparents came to California, you know, the ones from back East.

EM: What were your parents names, your mother and father?

G: My father was Vern Chaney and mother's name was Hazel. We had the grocery store downtown.

LH: What was her maiden name?

G: Crane

EM: When did they open or establish the store? Did they establish it themselves?

G: Yes, 1936, they opened the grocery store.

E: It was called what?

G: Chaney's. It is now Manal's restaurant.

E: How many grocery stores were around at that time?

G: When I was a little kid, four. There was Pay and Take It, Skaggs, that went to Safeway, then my dad work there at those three stores, then he went to Flemings and worked there for awhile which was Jordan's stationery then in 1936 he opened his own store. Until ..my son was five when he gave it up.

L: When was Spooner's?

G: I don't remember when they started but it was up behind where Flemings was. On Bodega Avenue.

E: Is that the building that is Main Street Theatre now?

G:No that was Pease Drugstore. Spooner's was behind it. It was a different building, not part of the same building. That real estate agent, place is there now on Bodega Ave.

L: It was. It was right next to the City Hall.

E: What are your earliest memories? Did you live right in Sebastopol? Where did you live?

G: On Wilton Ave. then we moved over to Maple. We went back to Wilton. then we moved down on South Main Street. We lived there from just before daddy opened the store we moved into that house in 1936. Then I went to Analy and grammar schools here. So I've been here a long time.

E: What did you do after school?

G: Worked for my father.

L: You went to Junior College

G: I went to JC for a year and a half. I worked for my father until after I got married.

L: But you wanted to go on to school.

G: Yes I did but it didn't work. My mother wouldn't let me leave town.

L: Kind of how things were. They didn't like their children going to big towns.

G: I had a job offer and college to go to and everything given to me on a silver platter. But I wasn't allowed to do it.

E: Did you have a scholarship?

G: No I had a cousin, her husband was an attorney and he was going to put me through school.

L: Art School.

E: Where was that?

G: Pasadena Junior College. He had me all registered and everything. He called my mother and said I'm staying. We were in Los Angeles. My cousin was living in San Marino. I said I'm registered at Pasadena Jr. College. She said No you're not. Come home.

L: How old were you?

G: Oh I was 17-18.

L: So you could have stayed, but you wouldn't go against what your parents wanted, or your mother wanted.

G: My mother, not my father.

E: But you wanted to go to art school?

G: I was going for interior decorating. Then I met a friend of my cousin afterwards, 4-5 years afterward. If I had gone to school I would have had the job down there in doing interior decorating on subdivisions. There were big subdivisions, big houses. But I didn't get the opportunity.

E: Did you do some other artistic things later in your life?

G: These, and sewing. My family, kids bring me dolls from different countries.

E: So you came back home and went to work for your father.

G: Then I went to work for Thompson-Costa, no I went to work in the cannery for Walt Stone for a long time, for two years until I got hurt then I quit that and I went to work for Thompson-Costa Cleaners for 12 years then I worked for Superior French Laundry for 14 years. Then I retired. I said that's it. Forget it.

E: In the meantime you got married.

G: In the meantime I got married. Had one son. I have one granddaughter.

E: Your husband was a local person?

G: He was raised in Graton. But he was in the service when I met him. We were married for almost 50 years.

L: Where did his family come from?

G: He was born in McKitrick, Bakersfield area. His mother, I don't know where she was born or his father.

E: Your husband's name was?

G: Stanley

E: Stanley Kitchel

G: My son's name is Wesley.

E: How did you meet?

G: At a dance. In those days where most people met.

E: Was this wartime?

G: 1945. We married in '45.

L: They had dances at the hall next to the theatre, the Legion Hall, American Legion Hall was next door to the theatre (Analy).

G: We met in Monroe (Hall) over in Santa Rosa on College Ave. The Monroe Club House.They still have dances there.

L: Then there was a place on Sebastopol Road If I'm right, going over there, what did they call that place?

G: I don't know, I was trying to think about that one the other day.

L: I want to say Half Way House, but there was another place called that between Sebastopol and Santa Rosa but it was a grocery store. But the other one, even I went to that and I didn't go to dances.

G: This is right across from the junior high the dancehall she is talking about. Midway that's it.

L: It was a public dance place with supervision.

E: Which branch of the service was your husband in?

G: U.S. Army. He was in Alaska for 4-1/2 years. He was at Amchitka and Sitka and Atu.

E: After the war he came back here.

G: We married. He worked for my dad for I don't know how many years. Then he went to Thompson-Costa and drove truck for them for 17 years. Then worked for Superior French for 12-14 years.

L: They used to deliver the laundry and clothes, I don't know if they still do or not (G: No) to out..to Point Arena.

E: Door to door? Or to other cleaners?

G: Door to door. Then he went to the Army base above Point Arena. Five miles up.

E: It's a long way to take clothes.

G: He went twice a week. He went to Tomales, Petaluma, Valley Ford.

L: This was Thompson-Costa mostly.

G: He went to Synanon too down there.

L: Was it a drug rehabilitation or mental.

G: Drug. Big attornies, big shots.

E: Synanon that was a different era wasn't it?

L: All so hush, hush.

G: Then he delivered to Bodega Bay, Santa Rosa and Sonoma. He was all over the county.

L: Did he have some funny experiences driving. Tell a couple of them.

G: One was with Wes. He took my son with him one day and I don't know what happened but they got to Petaluma and were going to have lunch and went to get out of the truck and his levi's split right up the seam so they had to get him back in the truck and find safety pins and he sat on safety pins for the rest of the day. Wes came home and said I hurt. Stan had all kinds of experiences. One was he had met a nurse up at Seaview ranch, I mean Seaview Lumber. It was right after Wes was born, he had colic so bad. He was telling this nurse about it. She says well, we had a pint of whiskey in the nursery all the time down in the city where I worked. He says oh for you guys. She says no for the babies. They gave them whiskey when they had colic and water. So then we took him down to my mother's that night he was out, he passed out. She was angry. What did you do to this kid?

E: Was you husband or son involved with the volunteer fire dept?

G: Yes, Stan was part of the Graton Fire Dept for 30 years and our son is in the Santa Rosa Fire Dept. He's a Captain over there.

E: Cause you've got your radio there.

G: My father was a volunteer in Sebastopol. My grandfather was a volunteer in Healdsburg.

E: What do you remember of downtown Sebastopol. What was it like when you a girl?

G: It was fun. We knew everybody in town.

E: There probably weren't any more store than there are now?

G: They had a movie house up by where the bike store is now. Starland. There was Miller's Dry Goods across the street. They had one of those things you put money in that you pulled and the money went upstairs.

E: Pneumatic tube? G: No it was on a rope and you pushed it and pulled it.

L: It was a cyclinder that was kind of round and long and you put the money in it and shut it.

E: This was to make change for every purchase? L: I guess they didn't trust the clerk it went to a central office.

G: From there Miller's moved across the street to where the bike store is, where Carlson's used to be. That was Perris's Dry Goods for a long time. Then Carlson bought it.
There was an ice cream parlor. Where the Country kitchen is now. Down on the corner by the old chamber of commerce that was an ice cream parlor. Perry's owned that.

L: Didn't Worth's Drug Store have a counter in it, an ice cream counter.

G: Pease did.

E: Ice cream stores sold more than ice cream didn't they? Milk and butter?

G: They sold lunches and pies, cake etc.

E: It was more like a restaurant than a place where you bought dairy products.

L: They had jars of candy on the counter, I remember that.

G: McIntire owned it once. Who was the other owner?

E: Do you remember Starr furniture. What did they sell? Did they make their own furniture?

G & L: Oh yes, that's where Copperfields is. They brought furniture in. They didn't make anything themselves that they sold. There were two brothers. They always had beds in the window or in those days, a chest of drawers for the man and a vanity for the woman that had a mirror in the middle and a mirror on each side and you sat down to it. And refrigerators, freezers. Front room furniture. They were there a long time, to the 1960s. Then there was Mr. Webster, no that's not it. the Men's Haberdashery story. Allison. No that was down by the store. This was up on Main Street. Wester's Men's Store and Cleaners.

G: I saw Stan James the other day, he had a store in town. That was later. On the corner they had Miller's Trucking, a barber shop next door, Triggs on the next block.

L: There was a garage. A couple, one next to the theatre along in there where the creamery was.

G: Oh I know where you're saying.

E: The bar that's Jasper O'Farrell's now. That's an old building isn't it? What was in there?

G: Tomei L: Moran's G: Moran's was up further. E: Was it also a bar? L: Moran's was a pool hall and bar. G: They sold ice cream and had lunches. Remember Cotton. he could cook. Between that and Tomei's was the Western Union.

L: Beryl Fraser said she used to go - there was a side stairway to Moran's. She used to go up there and get candy from somebody who was above Moran's. Next door to the bank.

G: There was two drug stores, Worth's and Pease.

L: Lots of doctors were in the buildings above the stores.

G: Over Pease, there was a chiropractor. By Wester's there was Dr. Bomer (sp?)
Across the street was Dr. Batchelder and Bixby.

L: And Dr. Miller had, he called it a sanitarium, right across from where the Eastern Star, the Masonic Lodge is there was a big old building there. I don't know what was downstairs but he was upstairs and people went there to recover from ...

E: The present day Masonic Lodge building or an old Masonic Lodge.

L & G: It's the same one. They made it from a two story to a one story.

L: Across the side street there was a big apt. house there.

G: The dancing studio was there downhill. and the old hospital.

E: Do you remember a movie theatre where the bare wood furniture place is now.
Did you ever go to the movies there.

G: Oh yes, that was El Rey. I was an usher there for a long time.

L: Have you seen the Sebastopol (done in 1949) tape? it shows the movie theatre in it.

E: I'll have to look at it.

L: They kept moving it back and forth from up one end of town to the other and then they'd have a contest for the names, it was the Royal Theatre and somebody..the contest winner was the El Rey and I thought that's no different from the Royal. How come they chose that name? It was the same people. Tocchini and Gambogi's owned the theatres in Santa Rosa and Sebastopol and still do, are involved in it.

E: Where was the site when it was at a different place?

L: It was up by the Legion Hall where the Safeway is. On the corner there was a service station, then there was an alley that went back with houses behind. Where Mr. Fouts fixed your shoes. Henry Martin had part of his nursery behind there.

E: And this is all what is now Safeway parking lot?

G&L: Yes.

L: Then there was the American Legion hall, Analy Theatre, Art Point. Built brand new.
We should see John Williams who bought the Art Point Studio from the original owner.

E: They are on our list to talk to.

L: The first theatre was down where Carlson's was (Starland).

G: I used to dance on that stage.

L: And later it became a bowling alley. The Blue Room. We're getting mixed up.
The Blue Room was a restaurant, bar and had a bowling alley in back. It seems it had an upstairs.

E: It couldn't have had many lanes? How many did it have?

L&G: It had three or four. Daveiro's was next door. Jack's. It's still there. It's called Main Street Saloon. It's still the same old building. Go in the back door and you're in history. And next to that was a barber shop on that side of the street and there was.

L: Well the post office was on the corner originally where Carlson's was. Odd Fellows, the bottom of that bldg. That's the first post office I remember.

G: From Jack's bar, there was a barbershop then there was Wohler's. Then there was a TV store.

L: Wohler's was a typical old, old building with T&G roof, wood flooring. Everytime they'd walk you'd walk crooked. They had a counter had stools where you could look through pattern books and further back was material and other things.

G: Mr. Wohler had a radio repair shop in the back. Everything in town, if you were to go down the alley, in those days, if you went behind the old Carlson's that was all part of the Chinese settlement and on the other side by Pellini's that was another section of Chinatown.

E: So Chinatown started right where the Plaze is today? Do you remember going in any of that area, cause Laurie says she never was allowed to go into Chinatown.

G: We went to Chinatown to buy fireworks where the old Diamond National Lumber place is now. True Value is where there was an old Chinese Grocery store and her name was Kam Kee, Kum Kee. She was the cutest thing. Real Chinesey, they played games behind the building in back.

L: I remember my brother going there to gamble. He'd come with that little paper with the punches in it and it smelled so Chinesey. And they'd eat down there too. When it was lunch time they'd get a quick whatever.

G: Moran's had a card room behind their place too. Cause all the doctors and everybody was down there at lunch time.

E: Was this legal or illegal?

G: I don't think anybody knew. L: I don't think there were any laws saying whether it was or not. G: I remember when my dad.. L: It was the thing they did for companionship. I don't think it was a lot of money involved. I always thought the Chinese gambling was illegal but it was so hush-hush.

G: Remember where that Chinese fellow lived, his name was George, lived behind Pellini's and he had a restaurant and they played cards behind.

L: The only Chinese one I knew was Isabela Wong.

G: There weren't any Chinese in school with me, we had Japanese.

E: What happened to Chinatown. What happened to the people who had businesses?

G: I think they died off. Chinatown was torn down.

L: I think they moved and perhaps the businessmen in town wanted the property and it was not up to or beginning to decide that people were living unhealthily. There weren't any codes. The building were deteriorating.

G: They were. You'd go into Kum Kee's and you would step up the steps and you'd be walking like this, the ground was wood.

L: Too many people in one place. I think a lot of the Chinese started working different places like going to the mines and going places and there was nothing in Sebastopol to keep them here. So they just...

G: The whole back where you park by the Plaza was Chinese and across Tru Value. Barnes St. and behind Pellini.

E: It was all one building after another? Solidly built.

L: Kind of lean to's.

G: I remember behind Borba's you know Schmidt's Stationery Store. I went behind there one day and I didn't believe it but you see pictures.. but I think..the only one I remember was a Chinese girl she worked for, her father father worked for Jack Fowler's mother.

L: What did he do?

G: He was just a cook. Came up from the city. Was a cook for Fowler's, not Fowler's but Joneses.

E: Did Chinese people get established here by working on farms? Or how did the community get established here? They were here when you were born.?

L: I think in some of the history there was a lot of Chinese workers. Didn't Mary Trigeiro say they had Chinese workers on the ranch. I think when one came they got enough money to send for their family.

G: I remember my dad saying in Healdsburg a lot of the Chinese were down by the railroad track and they had pigtails. My dad remembered those who had pigtails. I didn't see any of our Chinese here... (with pigtails)

L: Chinese came to work on the railroad. the narrow gauge that went up through here. So some decided not to work on the railroad they wanted to do gardening or cooking or something so they branched off.

E: If that was 1880 with the railroad, there were a lot of hops being grown and that was some work Chinese people did.

G&L: I don't remember that. E: (Hops growing) was practically done probably by the time you were born.

L: I remember the hops it seemed it was the white migrant workers mostly who worked on them. They came to work in the berries, cherries, apples and hops. And then they moved on. Well some stayed.

G: And the prunes. They'd go from here to Oregon or someplace else and then they'd come back down and go into the valley and work down there.

L: Stayed in the auto camp which was down by the lagoon and soon as the fruit was over they moved on. Then I think some women decided the kids needed to go to school, to be cleaner so the people moved on or stayed here and established and take care of their families more than being transients.

E: We were talking about Chinatown, is there anything else you can add?

G: I don't think so.

E: Other than firecrackers did they trade within their own community.? They must have had businesses....

G: This is where we got our firecrackers was a regular grocery store for Chinese food. You could smell, just like going to Chinatown inthe City, you can go into a store down there and some of the stuff (herbs, incense, cooking oil smells) Opium.

L:I'm sure the older people smoked. I don't know too much about it.

G:I remember Chinatown with Mrs. Kan (sp?) Kum? Kee. She was cute, very friendly. That was where the Tru Value (Hardware store) is now. And all down through there, there was no Barlow's, there was no anything . The Catholic Church was there. Then they moved.

E: Laurie was saying your grandparents, there were some interesting things you could tell us about your grandparents.?

G: They came in a covered wagon from Ohio. (E: This was which grandparents?)
My father's. The Chaney's to Healdsburg.

E: They settled in Healdsburg. What did they do?

G: My grandfather was a carpenter. My grandmother was a homemaker. She had five kids, so she stayed home. Then I had three uncles that were carpenters but one was also an architect and I had an aunt of my father's.

E: What kind of building did your grandfather get involved with? Houses?

G: Houses. He built their house. Where they lived, I went out and took a picture because I wanted it for my granddaughter's scrapbook. And I asked the lady who lived there is there still the building in back of the house. She said oh yes. And that was where the first house was. When they came to California he built this house for them and it was more like a shack. (L: They probably didn't have indoor plumbing) No, and they had a cow. My grandmother said she's named for every cow in the county.

E: Do you remember what street that's on.

G: Sherman St. in Healdsburg.

E: They built the basic little house to live in, did they build something else later?

G: Oh yes, they built a great big home, it had three bedrooms, one bath and 1/2. A big dining room, living room, kitchen, sewing, big back porch. Then he built on the back of the property a chicken houses and every month, we'd go up and unload 1500 baby chicks. Take them out of the boxes set them there. After he retired from work he would sit and talk to those chickens. That was his business. (L: They made money) On Fridays, my grandmother had orders for chickens and would go out and help, pick and clean.

E: So they raised them to edible size.

G: They were big chickens, New Hampshire reds.

E: They must have had a pretty good size piece of property.

G: They did. It was all subdivided eventually and sold. They had more than an acre. There are three houses in the back and their house. (E: Do you know the address?) 134 Sherman. It's going out toward Dry Creek, off the main Street, Healdsburg Ave. (L: On the east side of the freeway) But my grandfather built a lot of houses out that way. And my uncle had a place at the River, Fitch Mt. and he built six houses up there on that property. I would like to have had his house, it's on a hill and double windows and a big front room on either end and you can see the River either way.

L: Have you been up there to see if they're still there?

G: No I haven't. Well I know the other houses are down on the River. They're still there but I haven't seen this house. He was a candy maker. (uncle) I have a picture of their house, it's a nice home. It was rock front and wood.

L: So what did your father do? He wasn't a carpenter.

G: My dad was the only one of the whole darn family that didn't become a carpenter. He went to work for Garret (sp?) Hardware in Healdsburg and then he went to his own business as selling washing machines, Stewart Warner radios. He had a partner in Charlie Tucker and then he got out of that and came here to Sebastopol. (E: And did the grocery store?) He got almost burned to death in Healdsburg. He hit a live wire and had 15,000 volts of electricity go through his fingers and came out the toes of his shoes. Just lifted up the toes of his shoes.

E: I guess he wanted to change professions then?

L: How old was he then, about?

G: Mom and Day were married three years before I came along, He must have been in his 30s /40s. (L: And he lived to be an old man!) G: He lived to be 93. With ulcers. He used to come home from the store and had to have milk, cream and crackers. That's all he could have for I think almost a year or more. He was very good about it, he didn't holler or squak about it. Every two hours, that was his lunch, breakfast, dinner and in between snacks. It worked. (E: Do you cure ulcers or just live with them?) G: They're curable. My husband had ulcers and they operated on him and took more than half of his stomach out. Never cured him. Always had problems. Daddy got pneumonia every year after that but other than that.

L: Guess his lungs were injured.

G: Course they didn't have flu shots then.

E: I was going to ask you if your grandparents, did you know your grandparents?

G: The ones in Healdsburg.

E: Did they talk about coming in a covered wagon?

G; Not very often. You had to more or less, dig. My grandparents weren't that kind of people. My grandmother was raised on a ranch in Nebraska. My grandfather was from Ohio but I don't know, I guess he lived on a ranch. I've never been there, I'd love to see where they used tolive.

E: In Nebraska?

G: In Nebraska. My grandmother then lived near Lincoln. If you wanted to ask her anything you had to squeeze it. You had to really sit down and say I want to know this and that.

L: And they both spoke English so they weren't foreign.

G: No they weren't (foreign). My great grandmother on my grandfather's side was French. She was pretty I never saw her.

L: Did they ever say why they came to California? G: No.

L: Were they married when they came? G: Yes. They were very tight lipped people.

L: Religious? G: No, no, my god no not my grandfather. My grandmother, well I don't think so.

L: A lot of people came to California to get away from religion or their parents or strictness.

G: I think they came for adventure, I think so. But they were young people when they came here. I don't know how old they were.

E: I'm amazed how many people settled in Nebraska cause the weather has got to be awful there. I would think that would have drove them out here.

G:I can remember her telling one time that it snowed so hard that they had an outhouse and had to have two ropes from the house to the bathroom. She would go out there to wait until the dishes were done. (hiding out from chores) I don't think I'd like to live like that.

L: Usually they hear about someone that came, they get a letter. Were the kids all born here?

G: Yes, up in that little shack. Then he used it for aworkshop afterwards. He did fancy work. (L: Beautiful woodwork) I have a table top he used to play cards, got so he'd sit in the sewing room with this table across the rocker and try to "beat the Chinaman" in solitaire. Everyday we'd ask him did you beat him Grandpa. Nooo.

L: See what an expression that is, "beat the Chinaman" where did that come from. Playing solitaire.

E: They associated Chinese with gambling? G & L: yeah, I guess so.

G: He was real good to us kids. I had two boy cousins and I went up every summer and stayed and took swimming lessons in Healdsburg in the River. At the Bridge. He would take us down and he had a little old Ford pickup. He would take us to the River with our bikes. And he'd take our bikes out of the pickup and then he'd leave the minute we'd touch the water. And I never could figure out why he did that. So one day I was noisy and got curious and I said to my grandmother "How come grandpa never watches us swim?" She said, what does he do. I said "well he takes us down there, we got out, he takes the bikes and puts them out and then he leaves. How come?" She said he's afraid you're going to drown. He didn't want to see all three of us drown at one time.

E: Did someone drown in his family that he had that concern?

G:No, he had a son that was a daredevil and dove off the top of the railroad bridge up there. Then he pushed my father off the bridge.

L: Did your grandfather swim?

G: No and Pa didn't either. He'd rather go fishing then go down to the river and swim. But my uncle was the daredevil of the family. I look at that railroad bridge every so often and say he went off the top of that.

L: I bet he learned fast.

E: Tell me something about your parents, your family life, what did you do for fun?

G: Very plain. I don't think in those days we did too much.

L: When you lived on Wilton, did you play in the street at night with the kids.

G: Oh yeah, kick the can with the Wetch boys. I was only girl in the block so I became a tom boy at a young age. There were fiveWetch boys and Lee McFarlane. We all played kick the can, rollerskated or played hide and seek at night, when we got a little older. That house we lived in up there on Wilton Avenue had a porch and when it rained we could skate around the side of the porch. It was a two story house. One day I was skating and it was raining like holy heck, my sister was little, I came around the corner and went right through the window. Mother said that will teach you, you won't do that again. I didn't even get cut. My mother called my dad and said you won't believe what your daughter just did.

E: Your daughter....

L: But you took dancing lessons, did you take piano lessons?

G: From Mrs. Michaelis. Just didn't like that woman.

L: And there were recitals. Piano recitals and dance recitals.

E: What kind of dancing?

G: Tap dancing. L: Acrobatic. G. Even danced at the Roxy Theatre in Santa Rosa. One girl wouldn't go on the stage unless her dad bought her a five pound box of candy, I'll never forget that. She wouldn't give us any.

L: Kind of a left over vaudeville. There were two theatres, the California was kind of high class, more expensive, and the Roxy was kind ..everybody could go. and also beside dance recitals and they'd have contests where you'd play the violin etc. amateur night. And they had giveaway food and refrigerators and I forget what all.

E: Was this depression time or after depression?

L: I think it was depression times. There was when the theatre was down by your dad's store. I should get those years straight. That's when they gave away food and dishes if you went every Saturday you got a plate.

G: Daddy won $25 there one Sat. night and we up to the club for a week. He closed the store and we went up to the hunting club for a week with that $25. He was standing outside waiting for the numbers to be called. He said oh I have that one. He took it up to Dan Tocchini and Dan said by golly you do. How come you got that? I mean there weren't that many things around town to do in those days.

L: Did you play baseball in the street? G: No. I just roller skated in the streets.
L: There were a lot of boys on our street that played baseball.

G: Well you know when there's boys around you don't play with girls.

E: Did you parents belong to clubs or groups?

G: Mom and daddy belonged to the American Legion. And they belonged to the La Gaiety Dance Club.

E: Beryl (Frazer) was talking about that.

G: Years later I belonged to Rainbow, I am a charter member of Rainbow. Years later my dad joined the Masonic Lodge. Mother and I went in. I finally got my fifty year certificate the other day.

L: There was Eagles. G: Pythian Sisters. Mother and Dad belonged to the Pythian Sisters.

E: Was there a women's auxiliary for the Masons?

G: Eastern Star. Rainbow girls is young girls.

E: Knights of Pythias or Pythian Sisters that is men only?

G: No men and women. L: They had their hall on Santa Rosa Avenue above.

G: Well where the steps are where you go up to Westamerica Bank.

L: The next building was the Pythian Hall, where Best and Feaks where?

G: No before that. You went upstairs. (The Bank of Sonoma County was underneath)

E: What is the stated purpose of the Knights of Pythias.? Just a social group?

G: I don't know. Just a social group. They had a drill team in the Pythian Sisters that my mother was in.

L: There was always a parade on Armistice Day. One year was Sebastopol, Then Santa Rosa then Petaluma. and Healdsburg.

E: Each community hosted the parade?

L: It was a big deal.

G: Alice Bownser (sp?) that she remembered me when I was on the float and I was Liberty for the American Legion.

L: You were a teenager and hated doing it.? Or did you love it?

G: You just had to stand there and couldn't move. (E: your arm would get numb?) and it went from Petaluma Ave. down in front of our place on So. Main St. and clear up to Wendell Phillips on Healdsburg Ave. And you had to stand holding a torch all the way. And I can't go to the bathroom. I told my dad don't you ever ask me again (to do this) I guess I was independent in those days. Nasty. I told Betty Miller the other day that I was nasty and she said I've never seen you nasty. Don't get me mad. I have a sister. I guess you knew that.

L: Shirley
E: No. just the two of you in the family.

G: I'll let you have her. E: Is she younger or older than you?
G: Younger. Her name was in the paper yesterday, I got a kick out of that.
E: She is Shirley...?
G; Walker.
E: Oh, she's married to Lee.
L: You know how sometimes family's divide. The father takes one child and the mother takes the other.
E: You mean they have favorites.
L: So that's what happened here.
G: There's no companionship between the two of us.
L: And you were quite a few years apart.
G: Seven
E: When there is a big gap, that's kind of like my family. My sister is six years older and my brother is eight years older. Its like a separate family. They came first and my mother had my brother and I. We're the younger generation. There is a difference.
G: She never bothers to call to see if I'm still around or anything. I saw my nephew the other day, I don't even see them anymore, the kids. Unless I go out to the ranch to buy apples.
E: How many children do they have?
G: They have three, a girl and two boys. They have three grandchildren. Nope she doesn't bother, she goes her way and I go mine.
L: And they run an apple ranch, very busy and involved in a lot of public things.
G: He was with the Graton Fire Dept., was on the board. I used to go with my nephew, young Lee and we went to Fortuna and get apple cider up there. I'd never seen a contraption like they had there. It went in apples and came out juice all frozen. It was a freezer part on one end. I can't drink apple cider.
L: We had a cider stand in depression times. That's how we made money and I had two older brothers. You just get sick of it.
G: I got sick out at Mt. Vernon School one time when I went out with Norma Faught (sp?) She was a teacher there and they boiled apple cider. I was so sick for three days from it. I can eat apples. (L: You probably overdid it.) Knowing me, yeah.

E: Is it the acid.?

L: Well its so laxative when its raw. But I worked out at Occidental when they had a fair out there. They always have hot spiced cider and I just can't help but taste it.

Tape end.